

2012--13



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF MUSIC

2012-13  
season

Thursday, November 8, 2012  
12:10 pm. Walter Hall

THURSDAYS AT NOON

**Lecture: "The Real Experience Behind Oliver Sacks' Stories"**

Dr. Concetta M. Tomaino, D.A., MT-BC, LCAT

**DR. CONCETTA TOMAINO** is the executive director and co-founder of the Institute for Music and Neurologic Function and the senior vice president for Music Therapy at CenterLight Health System (formerly known as the Beth Abraham Family of Health Services) in New York, where she has worked for the past 25 years. Tomaino is a pioneer in the field of music therapy for individuals suffering from effects of stroke or other brain trauma or are afflicted with such degenerative neurological diseases as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

Born and raised in New York, the young Tomaino made her connection to music early, adopting the trumpet as her instrument of choice. The first girl in her family to attend college, Concetta enrolled at Long Island's Stony Brook University in 1972 as biology major on the pre-med track, but by her junior year, a continuing passion for music moved her to change her major to music. Forming a synaptic-like connection between music and medicine, Concetta turned her energies to music therapy, creating independent study courses because there was no music therapy program at Stony Brook. Tomaino graduated from Stony Brook University in 1976 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance and minors in psychology and sciences and an abiding interest in the emerging field of music therapy.

By 1980, Tomaino had joined Beth Abraham as the only music therapist (then part of the facilities department of recreation) and began to notice patients in the dementia unit responding positively and in some cases with remarkable speed, to music. She delved deeper into the neurological underpinnings as it became clear that music therapy had more to offer patients than a mere diversion from their everyday existence. It was at Beth Abraham in 1980 that she became acquainted with Dr. Oliver Sacks, the eminent neurologist who authored the book *Awakenings*, which was later made into a movie starring Robert De Niro and Robin Williams. She has collaborated with Dr. Sacks for over 25 years.

In addition to her long-standing contributions with Dr. Sacks (including his 1995 volume *An Anthropologist on Mars*), Dr. Tomaino's work has been featured in other books such as *A Matter of Dignity* by Andrew Potok, *The Mozart Effect* by Don Campbell, *Sounds of Healing* by Mitchell Gaynor, M.D. and *Age Protectors* (Rodale Press). Her work has been also covered nationally and internationally by leading television programs and networks such as the BBC and CBS. Dr. Tomaino earned a Masters and Doctor of Arts in Music Therapy from New York University in 1998.

*Also see Dr. Tomaino as a keynote speaker at:*

Music Care Conference  
Saturday, November 10, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Edward Johnson Building  
Register at: [www.room217.ca](http://www.room217.ca)

Forum on Research in Music Medicine  
Sunday, November 11, 2:00 pm  
Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building